



## Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools: Leading the Way Toward Healthier Youth

"Federally-reimbursable school nutrition programs should be the main source of nutrition at school, and opportunities for competitive foods should be limited" concluded the Institute of Medicine (IOM) <http://www.iom.edu/Object.File/Master/42/505/Food%20in%20Schools.pdf> in a recent report. Their directive was to prepare recommendations about appropriate nutritional strands for the availability, sale, content and consumption of foods at school, with attention on competitive foods.

According to the Report Brief at <http://www.iom.edu/Object.File/Master/42/505/Food%20in%20Schools.pdf>, "Research has shown that the

school environment has a vital role in shaping children's health behaviors...Children spend the majority of their day at school, often staying for after-school activities; the foods and beverages available during and after school can contribute a number of calories to their total daily consumption."

Two other initiatives from CDC have been used to promote improvement in children's health—Coordinated School Health Programs and Wellness Policy requirements for schools through the Child Nutrition Programs.

### IOM Recommendations for Healthy Eating at School

- Federally reimbursable school nutrition programs will be the primary source of foods and beverages offered at school.
- All foods and beverages offered on the school campus will contribute to an overall healthy eating environment.
- Nutrition standards will be established for foods and beverages offered outside the federally reimbursable school nutrition programs.
- Food and beverage recommendations for all ages at any time:
  - Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nonfat/low-fat dairy that are 200

calories or less per portion.

- No more than 35% of calories from fat. Less than 10% of calories from saturated fat.

- 35% or less of calories from sugar.

- Sodium of 200 mg or less.

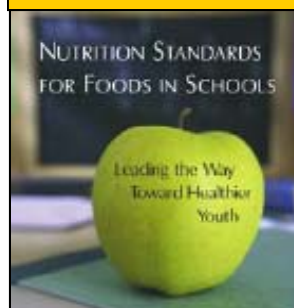
- \*Water without flavorings, additives, or carbonation.

- Low-fat (1%) milk, 100% fruit juice (4-oz portions for elementary/middle school and 8-oz. portions for high school).

- Caffeine-free beverages.

See page 2 for examples of Foods that fit the guidelines.

### Institute of Medicine Report



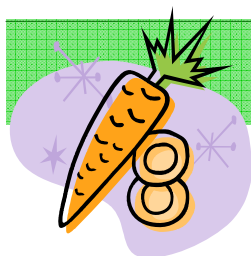
Study authorized by  
Congress and the Centers for Disease Control

#### Special points of interest:

- Guiding principles for eating healthy at school
- Financial impact of selling healthier foods
- Getting teacher support
- Creating a healthier workplace

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## Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools

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Details of the healthy food standards reported by the Institute of Medicine recommending nutrition standards for competitive foods and drinks sold in schools and a press release can be downloaded at [http://books.nap.edu/catalog.php?record\\_id=11899](http://books.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=11899). The standards apply only to competitive items not to federal school meals or to bagged lunches that children bring to school.

Foods meeting the highest criteria in the report include whole fruit; raisins; carrot sticks; whole-grain, low-sugar cereals; multigrain tortilla chips; some granola bars; and nonfat yogurt with no more than 30 grams of added sugars. Beverages are plain water, skim or 1% milk, soy beverages, and 100% fruit juice.

Foods that can be made available only after school include baked potato chips, low-sodium whole wheat crackers, graham crackers, pretzels, caffeine-free diet soda, and seltzer water. Sports drinks should be available only to students engaged in an hour or more of vigorous athletic activity, at the discretion of the coach.

Products sold as fundraisers should also be limited and schools should encourage foods and beverages sold at after-school and community events to conform to the standards. The food and beverage industry is encouraged to identify products that meet the criteria. A pod cast of the briefing is at <http://national-academies.org/podcast>.

## HealthierUS School Challenge— A Potential Summer Project



Throughout the school year the Team Nutrition newsletter has provided information on the steps to accomplish an application for the prestigious HealthierUS School Challenge. Perhaps completing the forms is a valuable summer project for your school and wellness committee.

**Step 7**, the last in the series, requires that "During meal periods in the foodservice area, your school does not sell/serve foods or beverages in competition with reimbursable meals" or your school sells/serves only foods that meet the criteria that emphasize decreasing fat and added sugar, increasing nutrient density, and moderating portion size. (Food Service Area refers to any area on school premises where program meals are either

FOOD OR BEVERAGE	CRITERIA FOR A LA CARTE OR VENDED ITEMS in a HealthierUS Challenge School
<b>Fruits and vegetables</b>	Fresh, frozen, canned, dried and must be found in Chapter 2 of the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs. <a href="http://schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov/FBG/2003FBG/%20Section%202.pdf">http://schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov/FBG/2003FBG/%20Section%202.pdf</a>
<b>Approved Beverages</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Reduced fat (2%), lowfat (1%), skim/nonfat fluid milk</li> <li>•100% full strength fruit and vegetable juice</li> <li>•Water (non-flavored, non-sweetened, and non-carbonated).</li> </ul>
<b>Any Other Individual Food Sales/Service</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Calories from total fat must be below 35% excluding nuts, seeds, and nut butters. <i>(Divide the calories from total fat by the total calories X 100.)</i></li> <li>•Calories from saturated fat must be below 10%. <i>(Divide the calories from saturated fat by the total calories X 100.)</i></li> <li>•Total sugar must be below 35% by weight. This does not include fruits and vegetables.) <i>(Divide the grams of sugar by the gram weight of the product X 100.)</i></li> <li>•Portion sizes for a la carte sales in the school cafeteria are not to exceed the serving size of the food served in the school lunch program.</li> </ul>

*"Nutrition standards for school foods and beverages not only improve the quality of the individual foods and beverages sold to students but also result in a shift in student purchases away from snack foods toward complete meals. Nutrition standards have a double benefit: not only do students eat healthier foods but school food service can actually increase their revenues."*

This is the way that the Center for Weight & Health at the University of California, Berkeley summarized the impact of a California law imposing nutrition standards on schools. In response to accelerating childhood obesity rates, states and school districts have implemented policies to restrict sales of certain foods or beverages and to set nutrition standards for "competitive foods"—foods sold on school campuses outside of school meal programs. An identified issue is that schools have become dependent on revenues from the sale of high calorie, nutrient poor foods and beverages to support programs and activities and to keep school food services financially healthy.

In 20 schools that were tested in the California study, "17 of the 20 schools (85%) experienced decreases of greater than 5% of revenues from competitive sales"; however, "total revenues increased at the majority of schools because increases in meal revenues more than compensated for

## Dollars and Sense: The Financial Impact of Selling Healthier School Foods

any losses in competitive food and beverage sales." Additionally, 16 of the 20 schools experienced increases in the number of lunches served and also breakfasts served.

The change appears to be driven by less available competitive foods and increasing appeal of the meals and cafeteria environment. The report concludes that "This trend likely benefited students by decreasing their consumption of snack foods and sweetened beverages in favor of more balanced meals." Changes that encouraged student participation included addition of salad bars, addition of a food court, upgrading the cafeteria ambiance, "grab and go" meals, remodeling the kitchen to accommodate more fresh produce, involving students, and creating commitment from the school district to withstand opposition. Challenges include open campuses, short meal periods, insufficient staff, perishability, beverage contracts, food sales that support athletic and other programs, insufficient funding, and schools with less federal subsidization. View the report at [http://www.cnr.berkeley.edu/cwh/PDFs/Dollars\\_and\\_Sense\\_FINAL\\_3.07.pdf](http://www.cnr.berkeley.edu/cwh/PDFs/Dollars_and_Sense_FINAL_3.07.pdf)



What are your Nutrition Guidelines?

Choose your School District:

Enter Your Guidelines

Your Maximum Guidelines	Value
Portion Size (oz)	4
Total Calories	200
% Calories from Fat	35
% Calories from Saturated Fat	10
Sodium (mg)	200
Dietary Fiber (minimum)	0
Sugar (g)	0
% Weight from Sugar	35

Does your snack comply with the Guidelines?

**3**

**Get Results**

**Your Snack Food Does Not Comply**

Entire Package Nutrition Facts	Value	Status
Portion Size (oz)	0.28	OK
Total Calories	200	OK
% Calories from Fat	25%	OK
% Calories from Saturated Fat	18%	Too High
Sodium (mg)	300	Too High
Dietary Fiber	0	N/A
Sugar (g)	6	N/A
% Weight from Sugar	75%	Too High

## Healthy Snacks Calculator

Knowing the nutrient content of snacks can help your school determine how various snacks relate to your school district's nutrition policies. This "Healthy Snacks Calculator" was created by Seattle Public Schools to evaluate snack quality. See <http://www.seattleschools.org/area/nutrition-svc/calculator/calculator.dxml> In step 1, enter the information about the snack you want to analyze. In step 2, choose "other" under School district and put in values for your snack food guidelines. For step 3, input the amounts from the snack food label. The result will show how your snack fits the guidelines with specific information on whether a value is "OK" or "Too High".



## How to Get Teachers on Your Side



Teachers are encouraged to support the nutrition education and physical activity initiatives in their Team Nutrition schools. A suggestion from Eureka, which has a very active team, is to get a variety of people on the Team Nutrition team including administrators, PE teachers, food service, Extension educator, parents, teachers, students, and local health professionals. There is usually a key person to schedule committee meetings and keep reminding the team to involve themselves.

In Eureka, teachers are given a small reward in exchange for their time. Elementary teachers there feel appreciated and have partnered with 9<sup>th</sup> grade family and consumer science (FACS) students to watch the Dr. Bill nutrition series on the SD DDN system. This year a colorful pencil was provided in exchange for returning a survey and they were given a box of strawberries (when they were in season and inexpensive) as an appreciation gift.

Teachers accepted bottled water in their classrooms after an exercise physiologist at a teacher in-service suggested that students need more water. The teachers can also have free bottled water which is stored in a fridge in the school as well as



**Colman-Egan Teacher In-Service**

at parent-teacher conferences. The FCCLA served fresh fruits and vegetables to the teachers after a speaker and also during parent-teacher conferences. They also served a healthy breakfast to them during American Education Week.

The Eureka 9<sup>th</sup> grade FACS class has implemented a *Healthy Lifestyle Salute*. The award states, "A healthy lifestyle salute to (name of teacher) who was seen (walking after school yesterday). They are given a gift certificate for fruits, vegetables, grains, or milk at the local grocery store. This could be once a day or once a week depending on funding. In Eureka the funds come from a small grant.

The *Healthy Hawks News* at Colman-Egan is delivered via the Internet to teachers and families every week. See the link at the bottom of their webpage at <http://www.colman-egan.k12.sd.us/> The recent teacher in-service called a "Rainbow of Colors" focused on nutrition and physical activity with presentations by an area health nurse and a dietitian. The group learned about exercise, wellness center opportunities, food values, and reading food labels. They were treated with a "rainbow" of foods.

## Celebrate Physical Fitness Month with the Amazing Nutrition Race



The Amazing Nutrition Race is an active competition to teach healthy lifestyle behaviors. Players follow clues to the finish line while learning about healthful eating and physical activity.

Clue cards are placed on the course for participants to collect. The first clue card directs players to the next and so on. Use posters, graphics, and other Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ (ESPH) materials to help with writing the clues and answers. Give away ESPH stickers, water bottles, or stretch bands. The race can be done inside or outside. See this and other "Bright Idea" activities at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/collection/Files/BrightIdeas/BrightIdeasAmazingRace.pdf>

## Worksite Wellness Tools

Summer may be an ideal time to plan a workplace wellness initiative at your school. *STRIDES TO A HEALTHIER WORKSITE TOOLKIT* is available for schools and other worksites to encourage employees to maintain or improve their health. Teachers can be the health role models that children need. The tool kit is available to download from the HealthySD website at <http://www.healthysd.gov/Documents/STRIDESHEALTHIER%20WORKSITE2006-3.pdf>



The tool kit states that "Worksite based programs involve planning and creating environments that make the healthy choice the easiest choice for eating and physical activity." Team Nutrition school settings are likely to be that healthy environment. The tool kit provides information on the link between healthy work environments and the bottom line, key elements of successful worksite wellness programs, strategies that support healthy behaviors, and resources to support worksite wellness programs.

One of the ways to encourage school workers to lead healthier lifestyles is to implement a wellness challenge as a way to make individuals aware of small steps that can easily be made to improve well-being. Follow the *WELLNESS CHALLENGE TOOL KIT* at <http://www.healthysd.gov/Documents/WorksiteStrides.pdf> to organize a wellness challenge at your school. Ideas will work with students too.



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## Power Panther Professionals Wellness Plans

If your students are familiar with the Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ Power Panther then perhaps your colleagues will want to implement a *Power Panther Professionals* worksite program for all school and child care staff. Staff will learn the importance of becoming positive, healthy role models for students.

The implementation includes a 12-week health education program designed to increase consumption of fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy products, whole grains and water; emphasize the importance of daily physical activity; increase awareness of the impact made as a role model for students; increase awareness of positive benefits of breakfast and healthy snacking; and increase awareness of the effects of healthy lifestyle choices. The kit available at <http://www.powerpanther.org/powerpantherprofessionals.htm> includes forms for goal setting, logging of food consumption, and informational newsletters.



## Activity Ideas from the NASPE Teacher's Tool Box



Teachers and care givers can find help with ideas for physical activity for summer programs or make plans for next school year at the website of the National Association for Sports & Physical Education (NASPE), [http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/template.cfm?template=teachers\\_toolbox.html](http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/template.cfm?template=teachers_toolbox.html). The monthly *Teacher's Tool Box* shares ideas for promoting quality physical activity and youth sports programs. Activities are tied to the NASPE standards. Every month there is a fitness calendar to send home with students, bulletin board ideas, information about national health observances, and the newest resource materials.